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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PO](#) [AF](#) [BO](#)

SUBJECT: PORTUGAL TO GUIDE GUANTANAMO DETAINEES DISCUSSION  
AT JANUARY 26-27 FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING (GAERC)

REF: A. STATE 4297

[1](#)B. LISBON 42

Classified By: Pol-Econ Officer Dana M. Brown, Reason 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) Summary: Portuguese FM Luis Amado will take the lead in the Guantanamo discussion at the January GAERC meeting to encourage EU member states to accept Guantanamo detainees, but will otherwise follow the EU consensus on Afghanistan, Gaza, and the Russia-Ukraine issues. In response to ref A demarche points, Portuguese Deputy EU Correspondent Florbela Cardy told us on January 23 that Portugal fully agrees with the U.S. positions on Afghanistan, the Ukraine-Russia gas crisis, and Gaza. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Guantanamo Detainees: Portugal requested that the Czech Presidency add Guantanamo to the lunch agenda to discuss a common EU policy on accepting Guantanamo detainees. Once the EU member states agree to the overall concept, Cardy said each nation would be responsible for working out the details including the number of detainees they would accept. She did not know which nations would support a common EU policy and pointed out that most EU nations had not made public statements on the issue. Cardy told us Portugal welcomed President Obama's statements on closing Guantanamo and said the GAERC conversation would probably be more constructive given the clear U.S. interest in moving forward. She stressed that Portugal valued its close relationship with the United States and consequently decided to lead the EU discussions on two US-focused initiatives: the Trans-Atlantic relationship and Guantanamo.

[1](#)3. (U) Afghanistan: Portugal does not contribute to the EU's mission in Afghanistan, but the GOP supports EU discussions to provide election monitors and an expanded EUPOL mission. At this time, however, Portugal does not intend to contribute personnel to the EUPOL mission. Cardy told us that Portuguese forces were stretched thin and would not be able to participate in both the NATO and EU missions successfully.

[1](#)4. (C) Ukraine-Russia: After agreeing that the EU should deepen relations with Ukraine, Cardy turned to the EU-Russia relationship. She concluded that Russia is a necessary trade partner and political ally and Portugal hoped that the newer EU members in Eastern Europe would "consider the group policy rather than bilateral history" when discussing Russia.

[1](#)5. (C) Comment: Cardy echoed comments from Portugal's Deputy Political Director Rui Maceira (ref B) when she pointed out the GOP's hopes that Guantanamo will bring the US and EU closer together in supporting human rights. Portugal appears to be selecting a couple of key issues to champion during the GAERC meetings and leaving the rest of the issues to others. Cardy seemed pleased that the Czech presidency facilitated Portugal's leadership on this issue and honored Amado's request to discuss the issue in January. The GOP did not

have such a quick, positive response from the French and Slovenian presidencies on the Trans-Atlantic agenda. End comment.

STEPHENSON